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14 April 1947

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY, R & E

Subject: Reconsideration of the Functional Branch

1. The concept of a Functional Branch was merely a T/O device for placing certain functional specialists who were definitely needed, but could not be placed elsewhere. No one has yet been able to conceive of a function for the Branch as an entity in itself. Reconsideration of the concept in the light of developments would therefore seem to be in order at any time. In view of the pending activation of a "Basic Intelligence Staff" and of my recommendations regarding the addition of certain detailed officers to the Projects Division of the Intelligence Staff, I recommend such reconsideration now. It appears to me that the strained and artificial concept of a Functional Branch is no longer required for its original and only purpose, the placement of requisite expert consultants in certain functional subjects.

2. The other than consultative functions of the projected "Sociological - Geographical" and Military Groups of the Functional Branch appear to have little or no meaning. One can conceive of current or staff intelligence of a primarily economic character not susceptible of regional coverage. One cannot as readily conceive of a strictly geographic, sociological, or military estimate within the responsibilities of O.R.E. The product of research in these subjects is basic intelligence, with respect to which O.R.E. has only coordinating and editing functions to be vested in the "Basic Intelligence Staff." Moreover, research in strictly military intelligence is definitely a function of the War and Navy Departments rather than of O.R.E.

3. So far as concerns expert advice on the geographical, sociological, and military factors in general estimates, ORE's functional authorities on those subjects would be as available for consultation placed in the "Basic Intelligence Staff" or the Intelligence Staff as they would be in an artificial creation called a Functional Branch.

4. I would:

a. Abolish the Sociological-Geographical Group and transfer the T/O positions allotted it to the "Basic Intelligence Staff."

b. Abolish the Military Group and direct the Branches

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to the representatives of the Service intelligence agencies detailed to the Intelligence Staff for expert consultation and for the procurement of strictly military data prepared in the War and Navy Departments.

c. Reconstitute the Economics Group as an Economics Branch analogous to the Scientific Branch. Such special attention to economic problems is justifiable on practical (as opposed to theoretical) grounds and is not without precedent, witness the existing organization of the Department of State.

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Chief, Intelligence Staff, U.S.

cc: Chief, Planning Staff  
Chief, Economics Group, U.S.  
Chief, Projects Division, I.C.

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